PANCHAYATI RAJ

JUNE 1965

Stone by stone this Rajasthani family is building a better house. This is a common sight in rural India today.

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LETTERS

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Sir,

THE MAJOR task before the country is to raise agricultural production. The problem has acquired greater importance in the context of the Chinese aggression. To meet the requirement of the country the Village Level Worker has already been instructed to devote 90 per cent of his time to agricultural development. But to solve the problem of food scarcity once for all and to make the country self-sufficient in this respect we will have to search for the reasons of the failure of the agricultural sector. And this will enable us to avert food crisis in future.

We will have to free our farmers from their sole dependence on nature. This requires adaptation of scientific methods and equipment on a large scale.

At present, the agricultural statistics do not cover the entire area of the village side and reliable data are not available; especially of certain areas and about certain items. In the absence of the reliable data no planning can be effective. At present the planning is done at the highest level and the V.L.Ws and other functionaries are required to persuade the people to fulfil the targets. This obviously is not planning and it seems to be based upon the felt needs of government organisations rather than on those of the villagers. The planning should be done at the block and village levels and should be based on the felt needs of the people. In case of agricultural development, the planning at the family level will be more effective. Farm planning which is done at the family level in Intensive Agricultural District Programme has given better production. This approach has to be implemented with real spirit in other blocks which are not covered by I.A.D. Programme. The planning will be further successful when the block will not remain an aggregate of the villages but develop into a community.

It is also necessary to control the market. In case of higher production, the government should take vital steps to maintain the price level. If this level is not maintained the farmers will not be benefited by more production. For this, the middleman's profit has to be reduced to the minimum. Otherwise the farmer will lose his interest to produce more. His interest to produce more can also be developed by nominating him as an important functionary at the block or State level. Some other ways of giving incentives can also be developed. The Government has taken appreciable measures in this direction but they need a number of improvements.

The last factor but not of the least importance is the leadership. Two types of leaders are generally responsible for increasing agricultural production—professional leaders and lay leaders. Village Level Workers and Agricultural Extension Officers are the professional leaders. With the sensitive leadership of these people the peasant efficiency to produce more can be raised through extension education.

(Continued on page 7)

By turning on the water tap Dr. Sushila Nayar, the Union Health Minister is seen commissioning the National Rural Water Supply Scheme at Malkhed.

MALKHED
The Saga of Success

B. V. KATAGADE

"WHAT MAKES you cry old man ?" I asked the sobbing figure by my side.

"I never thought that I would live to see this day," he sobbed, "these are tears of joy. This is really a red-letter day in the history of our village."

The occasion was the commissioning of the National Rural Water Supply Scheme at Malkhed, an obscure village in Mysore by the Union Health Minister, Dr. Sushila Nayar, recently. The scheme once for all put an end to the miserable plight of the villagers who had to fetch drinking water either from distant wells or the river. The purity of water was never guaranteed. Moreover, much time was wasted daily on it.

The provision of the protected tap water at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,50,000 will not only ensure a sound health for 5,500 people of Malkhed but also provide them with spare time to devote for increasing agricultural output. The old man was rightly happy for this tremendous achievement of Malkhed Panchayat.

GLORIOUS PAST

The small village of Malkhed which is now marching towards a bright future has a glorious past also. Originally known as Manyakhed, it was the capital of the Kingdom of the Rastrakuta dynasty in the eighth and ninth centuries. This was also intimately associated with great Kannada poet and King Nrupatunga who was also a Rastrakuta. But, in course of time "Manya-Khed", became "Malkhed" which lost all its splendour, and degenerated into an obscure village with no civic amenities. Life for the people turned into a daily drudgery. Despair was writ large on their faces. Malkhed was just one of those many villages in pre-Independence India, neglected and forgotten.

But, Malkhed is awake once again—revived and revitalised by the magic touch of the Community Development programme. Aroused from its age-long slumber, Malkhed like many other villages in the country began to move forward to a new life. Democratic decentralisation in the form of Panchayati Raj made Malkhed hum with developmental activities. Once the community started moving, there was no hurdle, no obstruction that could stop them. Malkhed started writing a new history which would be read by future generations with joy and pride and with respect for the present builders.

Today, a beautiful bridge spans over the sacred river Kagina which flows by Malkhed. Metalled

A view of the Harijan Colony at Malkhed

The office building of Malkhed Panchayat

roads, built by the villagers now connect Malkhed with Gulbarga, Sedam and Chitapur Taluka. No one will believe that Malkhed was once inaccessible—one had to ride on horse back or walk many weary miles to reach it. Now the buses of the State Transport come to the village. The villagers have donated land for the construction of a bus stand.

AGRICULTURE

Malkhed like so many villages in the country is mainly dependent on agriculture. More than 75 per cent of its people are engaged in it. Jowar and pulses are the main crops grown. They have readily accepted and adapted modern means of cultivation. They protect their crops by using insecticides. About fifty sets of plant protection equipments are owned by individuals and the Panchayat. That the villagers are keen to improve their economic lot is evinced by their growing demand for pumping sets to improve their irrigation system. Efforts are afoot to organise one co-operative lift irrigation society to make use of the river Kagina.

The large sized Cooperative Society meets the various requirements of the villagers. Besides giving loans, the society also distributes sugar, foodgrains, fertilizers, etc. A small sized godown has been constructed with the financial assistance of Rs. 10,000 from the State Government.

The farmers from nearby villages crowd the weekly cattle market at Malkhed. They come and discuss their problems with the members of the Panchayat.

EDUCATION

Malkhed has made rapid progress in the sphere of education. A school was an unheard of thing in the dark, gloomy days that are now far behind. The present generation of children are no longer condemned to a life of ignorance. Today, the village has not only separate primary schools for boys and girls, but also a High School.

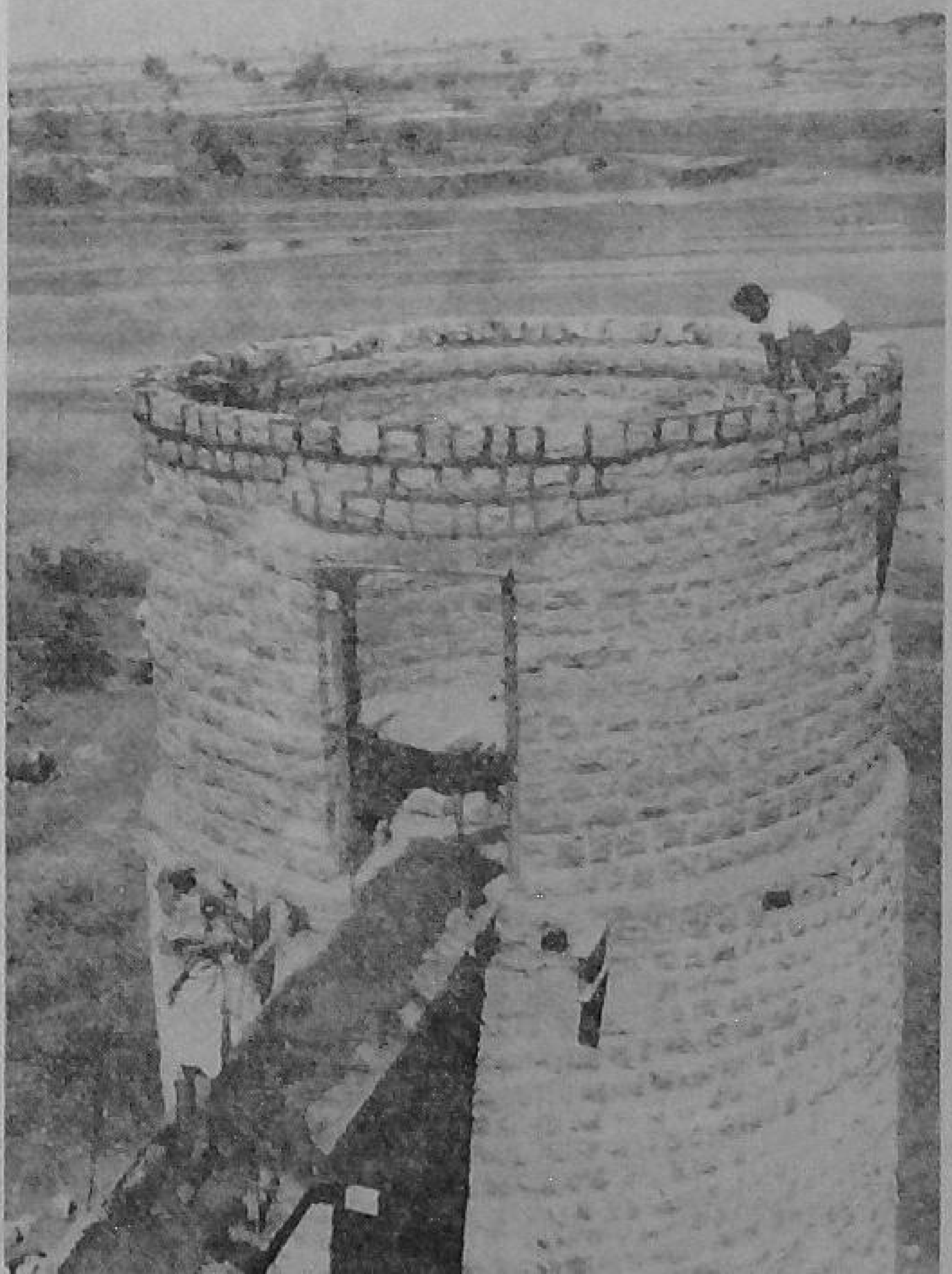
The youth movement is also gaining ground in the village. The villagers show keen interest in recreational activities. Besides the youth forum in the village, Farmers' Forum, Natya Sangh and a Bhajan Mandal have been organised. There is also a Rural Radio Forum. The women of the village have not lagged behind. They have their own association, tailoring centre and Balwadi.

HARIJAN COLONY

Malkhed also boasts of a Harijan Colony, consisting of about fifty families. The colony has been well laid out with uniform pattern of decent accommodation. There is also a move to add twenty-five more houses to this colony. The harijans who still remember with horror their previous huts which were nothing but filthy dungeons, are happy to live in these hygienic modern quarters. At the entrance to the village stands the beautiful office building of the Panchayat. In the same building is housed the village dispensary.

The Panchayat has a regular income of Rs. 21,000 while the expenditure is to the tune of Rs. 16,000. The Panchayat has provided free site to the Posts and Telegraphs Department for a new building. No one was compelled to part with his land for such non-remunerative works. The villagers donated land liberally as they realised that such amenities would be beneficial to the community as a whole.

Filtration well sunk in the river bed at Malkhed. In the background the river Kagina can be seen.



HOME FOR FLOOD VICTIMS

Malkhed Panchayat has also launched a scheme to provide homes to the victims of floods, who flow in every year in search of sanctuary. Three acres of land have been acquired for the purpose on which fifty houses are proposed to be built. The foundation stone of the colony was recently laid by the Chief Minister of Mysore, and the State Government has sanctioned Rs. 25,000 for implementing the scheme.

Two more landmarks that are slowly taking shape are a library, named after saint Teekacharya and a building to house the Nyaya Panchayat. The library building will cost the Panchayat an amount of Rs. 14,000 while the court room is estimated to cost Rs. 6,000. The Tanning and Leather Industries Cooperative is going ahead with the construction of its own building. The Society has so far received financial help from the Khadi and Village Industries Board to the tune of Rs. 67,000. All these buildings give Malkhed an appearance of a modern township.

Efforts are also being made to tap the mineral resources like gypsum, limestone, etc. for starting new industries on a small scale.

Thus Malkhed has stepped out from darkness and oblivion, and is boldly marching to progress and prosperity. The story of Malkhed is a saga of glorious deeds, which will ever be a proud monument to a people's effort to improve their lot.

Tangutur Changes Crop Pattern

irrigation through cooperation

B. SAMBASIVARAO

TANGUTUR, an unknown village in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh, has shown how collective efforts can change the lot of the people. The people of Tangutur, who are mainly agriculturists, found it difficult to eke out a bare living from the land which yielded nothing but tobacco. There was no water for the parched land. The river Mussi, which flows on the northern side of the village, does more harm than help the farmers. During rainy season the river inundates their land. It also changes its course every year causing tremendous soil erosion. In summer the river water turns saline due to flow of backwater from the sea.

This was the miserable plight of the people of Tangutur before they decided one day to put an end to it for ever. The three problems of inundation of land, erosion of soil and saline water had persisted and persecuted them for too long and now it was high time to solve them once for all. The flood water might be prevented by raising a bund and soil erosion by stopping the river from changing its course, they felt.

Out of this realisation was born the Tangutur Lift Cooperative Society Limited which was registered on November 1, 1961. The membership of the Society was restricted to eighty *ayacutdars* who had their land adjacent to the river. The share capital subscribed by the members was Rs. 980 only.

The land was mostly 15 feet above the river level and it was a problem to lift water to that height. Pumpsets driven by power had to be installed. Moreover, the plots were not adjacent to each other. They were cut by Grand Trunk Road from Guntur to Madras. So a water pipe was necessary to cross Grand Trunk Road. Similarly, the railway line from Vijayawada to Madras had to be crossed. When the Electric Department was approached it estimated that the cost

of the construction of a sub-station and laying of electric lines would be to the tune of Rs. 56,000 and demanded this sum to be deposited in the shape of the Andhra Pradesh Electricity Board Bonds. The permission of the High Way Department for laying a water pipe across the Grand Trunk Road could be obtained only at the payment of Rs. 10,000. To meet the cost of the whole scheme the Society found that a sum of Rs. 1,20,000 had to be raised. This was a gigantic challenge. But the people of Tangutur rose to the occasion. With strong determination they stepped forward.

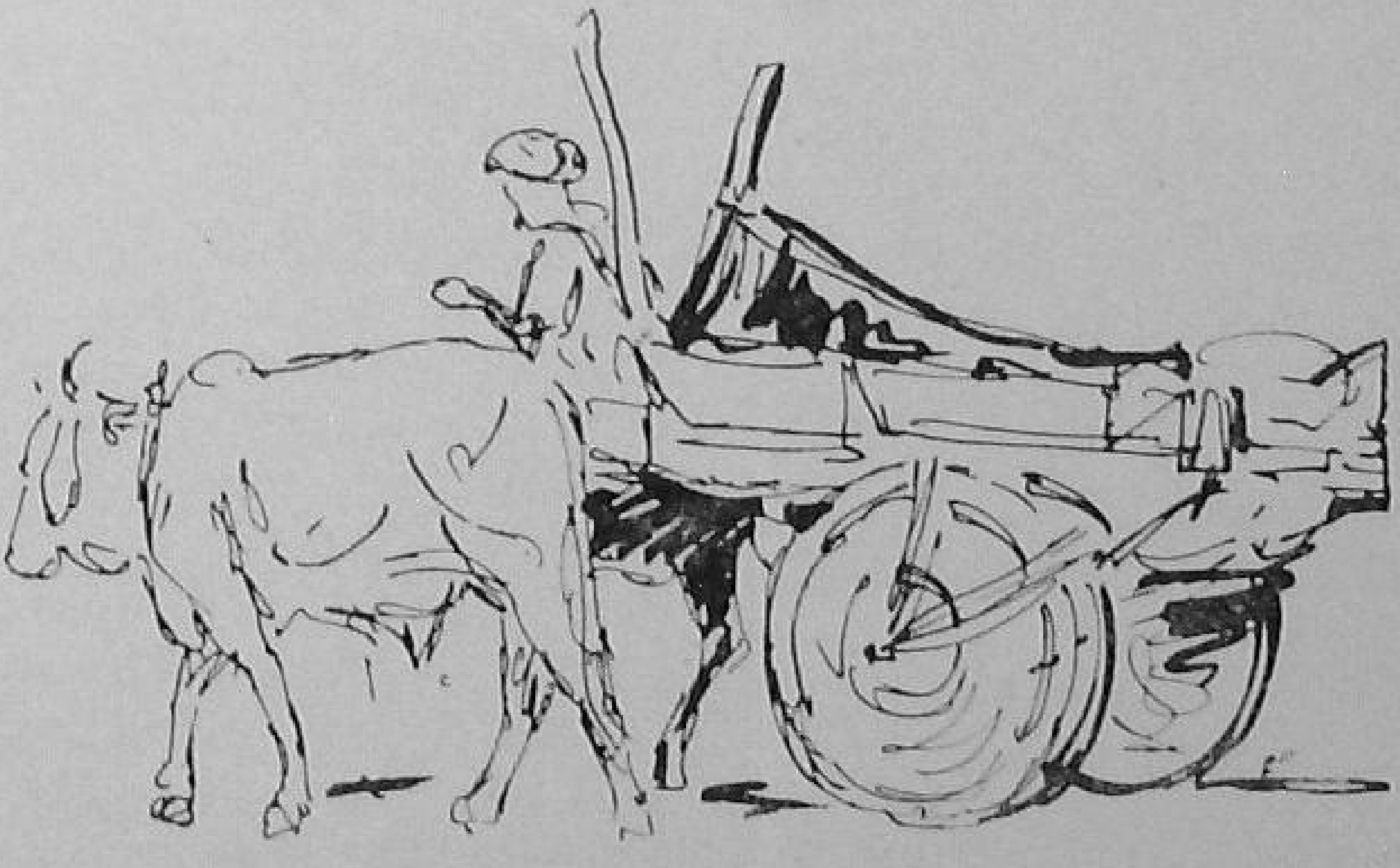
The members contributed Rs. 400 per acre on *pro rata* basis. As the scheme mainly aimed at raising agricultural production, the Ongole Land Mortgage Bank had no objection to sanctioning loans to the members of the Society individually. But the money was disbursed to the Society. The Andhra Pradesh State Electricity Board rendered a helping hand by waiving the initial deposit of Rs. 56,000. The Board, however, secured an assurance from the Society that there would be a minimum consumption of power valued at Rs. 3,400 per year by the members. The Society was also permitted to use the money thus saved in reclamation of land, construction of piles, etc.

The Society indented for electric motors and installed four pumpsets in three places. Two pumpsets were installed on the western side of the Grand Trunk Road with 20 H.P. motors housed in one shed. These pumpsets are now irrigating 150 acres of land. Similarly two pumpsets were installed on the eastern side of the railway line to irrigate another 150 acres of land. A big well of 12 feet diameter was dug at a distance of 30 feet from the water source and it was connected with the river through an underground pipe. At the two other pumping stations 6 feet wide wells

An electric pump in operation at Tangutur

were constructed at a reasonable distance to avoid damage by flood waters during the rainy season. The construction of these wells cost the Society an amount of Rs. 20,000 and Rs. 10,000 were spent for the construction of the irrigation canals, about six furlongs long.

The moment its thirst was quenched, the grateful land produced crop according to the desire of the farmers. Tangutur, where paddy cultivation was considered impossible even a few years ago, is now lush green with paddy. Besides paddy, it is also growing dry crops like jowar, tobacco and chillies. Tangutur is now marching confidently to prosperity. The people of Tangutur have proved that with strong determination and correct leadership it is possible to solve any problem under the sun.



TAKHATGARH

Richest Panchayat in Rajasthan

TAKHATGARH, a Panchayat in Pali District of Rajasthan has shown how the basic institutions of the three-tier system of Panchayati Raj can raise their own resources and fulfil the aspirations of the people by providing them amenities like tap-water, electricity, roads and sanitation.

Since the introduction of Panchayati Raj in the State, this Panchayat has raised its revenue by seventy fold. In 1959, when the Panchayats were given a 'go ahead' signal for implementing development works at their own, the annual income of the Panchayat was only Rs. 9,371 which increased to Rs. 4,14,764 in 1963-64. The present budget of the Panchayat estimated an income of Rs. 7 lakh during 1964-65, thus recording a fabulous increase in the income.

The Panchayat, which is a one-village Panchayat, inhabitated by about 8,000 souls, has a number of spectacular achievements to its credit. The whole village has been electrified and tube lights have been put on the main roads. A scheme of water works costing Rs. 5 lakhs is under execution. The main road of the village has been made pucca and construction of a Nehru Bal Mandir at a cost of Rs. 60,000 is in progress. A scheme to provide pucca drainage is being finalised.

All these wonders have been possible not by some miracle. It is due to sheer enthusiasm and ingenuity of the Sarpanch and the members of the Panchayat and then ready cooperation of the villagers that Takhatgarh has become the richest Panchayat in Rajasthan. The story of the success of the Panchayat makes an interesting reading.

The Panchayat planned for the development of the village on the lines of modern town planning and earmarked 52 plots for residential purpose. There was much demand for these plots so the Panchayat put these to auction. The highest bid for a plot of 1,000 sq. yards went to Rs. 14,000. Thus the Panchayat collected a total of Rs. 3,78,000 from the sale of the residential plots.

The way this land was acquired by the Panchayat shows the business acumen of the Sarpanch. There was a big plot of land in the heart of the village on which stood age old structures housing the Police Post, Patawarghar and the Primary School. The Panchayat made a proposal to the State Government to construct adequate buildings from its own income for these institutions. On acceptance of the proposal by the Government, the Panchayat constructed modern buildings at a cost of Rs. 1,18,000, on the outskirts of the village and the land thus vacated was developed and auctioned.

One of the biggest source of permanent income to the Panchayat is the Panchayat Market which yields about Rs. 4,000 annually as rent of sixteen shops located in it. The Panchayat has also constructed a spacious meeting hall and office in the Market.

Another remunerative project that ensures a regular income for the Panchayat is a hostel for boys. The seventeen-room hostel, built by the Panchayat to provide cheap accommodation to the students of neighbouring villages, who come to study at the multi-purpose higher secondary school at Takhatgarh, is likely to augment the income of the Panchayat by Rs. 2,400 annually by way of rent.

The Panchayat is fully aware of the housing needs of a growing township. There is a small canal colony near the village which is not adequate for the staff posted there. Other Government servants too face shortage of suitable accommodation. The Panchayat has prepared a plan for the construction of a small colony consisting of 20 quarters of varying size and accommodation for temporary residents in the village. A rental income from these quarters is expected to be about Rs. 3,000 annually.

The Panchayat has also resorted to taxation to strengthen its financial position. It has imposed taxes such as house tax, cycle tax, tax on hired bullock carts, but the consensus of the Panchayat is not in favour of laying much stress on this source of income. The Panchayat prefers to raise some permanent assets to solve its financial problems.

The Panchayat is running a seed multiplication farm on 15 bighas of land, allotted by the State Government to all the Panchayats for raising their own resources. A tractor along with other implements has also been purchased which besides serving at the farm, is placed at the disposal of the farmers of the

village at a nominal rent. This not only gives a fillip to mechanised cultivation but also adds to the fund of the Panchayat an annual income of Rs. 18,000. The Panchayat is planning to have two more tractors.

The moving spirit behind all these development activities is Sarpanch Shri Bansi Lal Baldia whose enterprising skill and devotion to the cause of development moved the entire village community to rally round and assist the Panchayat. Shri Baldia has been so popular among the villagers that he has been returned as Sarpanch in the recent election with an overwhelming majority.

Takhatgarh has set a noble example before all the panchayats in the country. It has, like so many successful panchayats, proved that our rural people can move mountains if proper leadership is there to create the urge.

.. (*Courtesy*: *Rajasthan Vikas*)

A front view of the 17-room hostel constructed by Takhatgarh Panchayat from its own income

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LETTERS

(*Continued from page 1*)

In our villages leadership is still determined by traditions. Introduction of any new change threatens the persons and the groups who enjoy the leadership traditionally. They, therefore, resist change. In these circumstances the new activities and new institutions have to be developed in such a fashion that it minimises the over displacement of traditional institutions and village leaders. Under this approach, many can be persuaded to assume constructive roles in the new pattern.

25-4-65
Pant Nagar
Naini Tal

Yours etc.,
R. K. Shukla
Assistant Professor of Extension
U.P. Agricultural University

FERTILIZER LOAN

Sir,

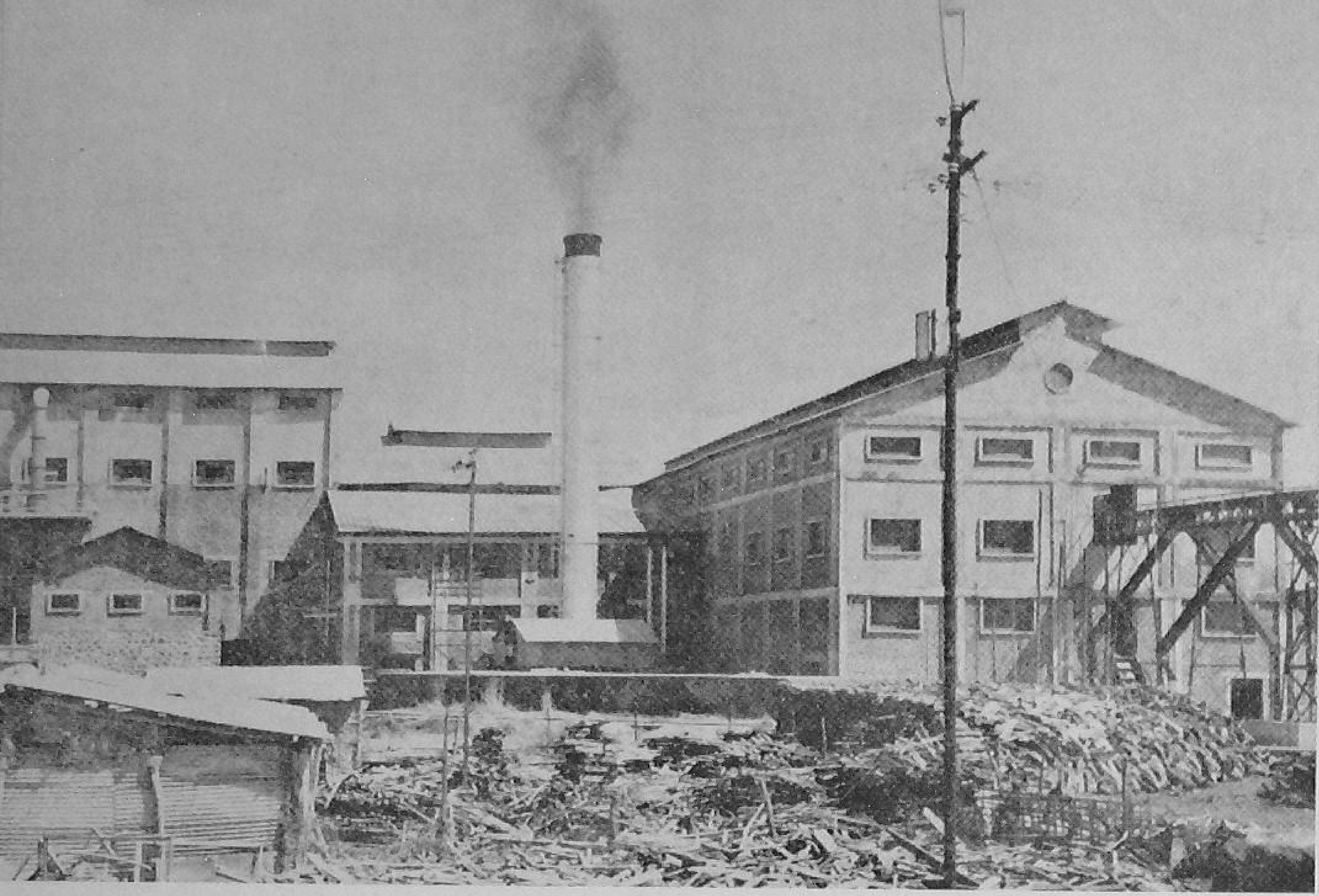
THE POOR farmers are, no doubt, grateful to the Government for helping them with fertilizer loan. But unfortunately, the method adopted to render this assistance is far from being satisfactory.

Under the present system the farmer is first required to apply for a permit. He is fortunate if he gets it within two months of his submission of the application. With the permit in pocket he makes a tiresome journey to the District Agricultural Depot only to find that most of the items mentioned in his permit have run out of stock. He has to wait once again for more than a month to hear the good news that all his requirements are available. But by this time he may not find any use for the fertilizer. In agricultural operation time is a precious factor. Delay caused in any aspect of the operation is bound to affect the produce adversely.

To save the farmer from this avoidable embarrassment and to ensure the timely application of fertilizer to his field, it is suggested that every Panchayat in the country may be provided with a fertilizer godown by the Government and the Sarpanch empowered to issue permit to the villagers living under the jurisdiction of his Panchayat.

30-4-65
Kumharsoin
Monghyr Dt.
Bihar

Yours etc.,
Md. Rizwan
Village Level Worker



A general view of the Sri Warana Sahakari Sugar Factory at Kodoli which shows how electricity has helped the village to march towards prosperity.

EL[…]

NEW[…]

The Jack Well of the Warana Sugar Factory at Kodoli stands against a beautiful scenic background.

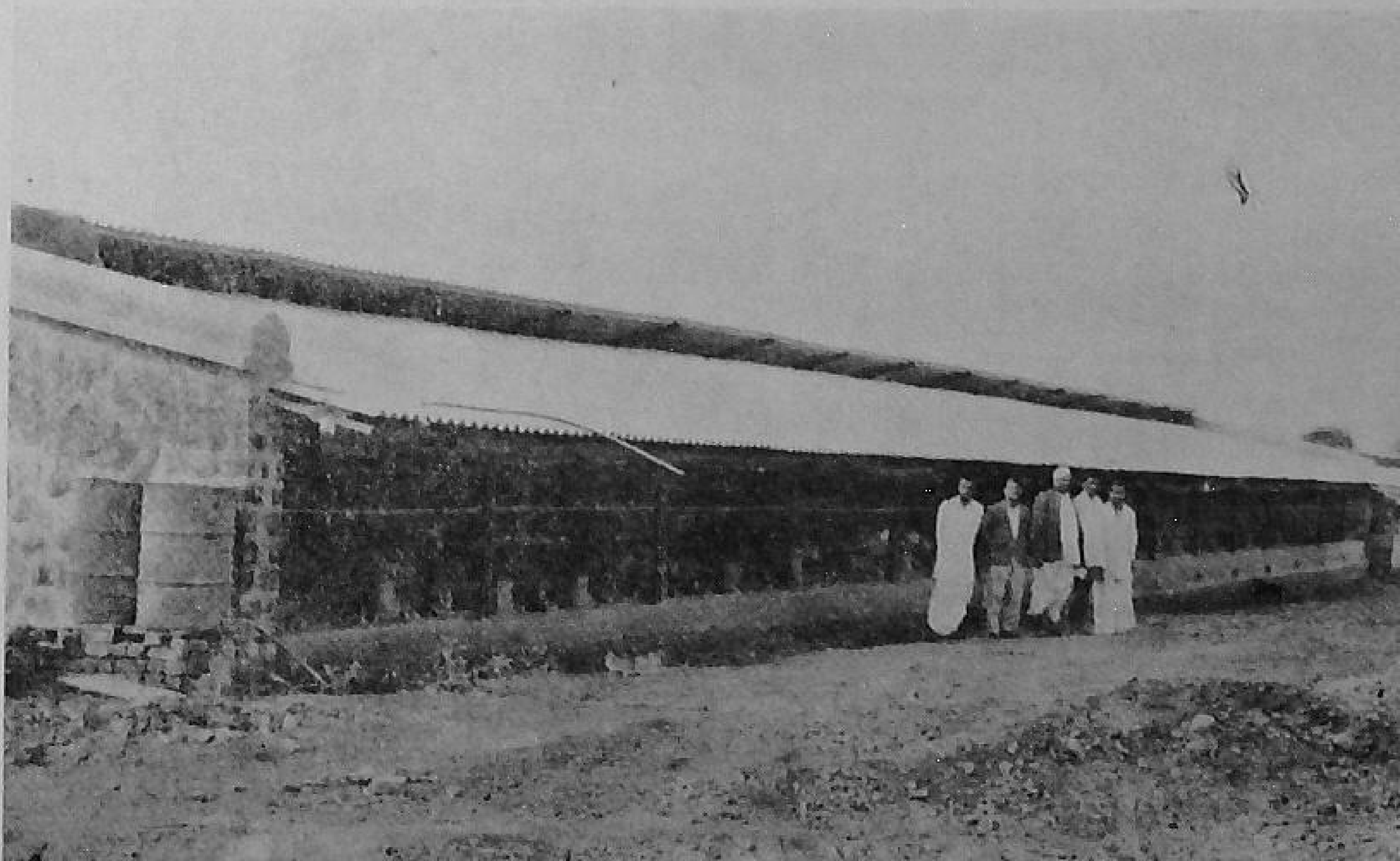
RICITY BRINGS LIFE TO KODOLI

The front view of the oil mill of the Sri Jawahar Sahakari Tel Utpadak Mandal Ltd., Kodoli

KODOLI on the Warna river in Kolhapur district is well worth a visit if one wants to see for himself the wonderful change that electricity has brought in rural Maharashtra.

Situated about 20 miles to the north of Kolhapur, Kodoli has a population of about 10,000. With the advent of electricity a few years ago, the village is replete with signs of prosperity everywhere. There are in the village a sugar factory which is fed by sugarcane grown in the surrounding 50 villages, three "baby" oil mills and 75 power looms. Besides a cooperative lift irrigation society, there are a number of electrically operated irrigation pumps owned by individual agriculturists. The establishment of a poultry farm on a large scale, where electricity holds the field exclusively for the incubation and brooding of chicks, is rapidly taking shape.

Indicative of the rise in the standard of living of the people are the decently dressed and healthy looking children and grownups. The local high school has 450 students on its roll and 120 others have gone to neighbouring towns to study in colleges. Besides street and domestic lighting, nearly 150 families have their own radio sets.



A view of the modern poultry farm of the Sri Warana Sugar Factory

Crop Yield Increased By 150 Per Cent

mahinderpal singh's achievement

TWENTY MILES north-west of Delhi in the village of Panjabkhor, a farmer, Kanwar Mahinderpal Singh, with his unorthodox methods of work, is the dynamic force behind a cooperative farm's venture in reclaiming the soil and boosting up crop yields by 150 per cent. Shri Singh, who has been trained in the field of agriculture by his illustrious father Sir Datar Singh, first hit the headlines in 1960-61 when he won the first prize in the contest in Kanjhawla Block for the highest yield of wheat per acre, held by the Delhi Administration. He had grown 57 maunds of wheat per acre.

After that, success has always trailed Shri Mahinderpal Singh. He had also won the first prize for the best green peas grown in Delhi State for the last three years. This year he won the first prize for green peas in Class C at the Third All-India Vegetable Show and also another first prize for the green peas at the Delhi Flower Show.

After partition of the country Shri Mahinderpal Singh moved with his family from Montogomery, where they had 10,000 acres of canal irrigated land, to Delhi. The family were allotted an area of 300 acres in village Panjabkhor. The land was in separate blocks and after consolidation of holdings in 1958 the owners of the land decided to pool their land to form a Cooperative Joint Farming Society. Kanwar Mahinderpal Singh was unanimously elected its Executive Vice-President.

LAY-OUT OF THE FARM

For the first two years two tractors alone were put into operation practically day and night in reclaiming and levelling the fields. Extensive work was undertaken on the layout by making irrigation channels, digging drains, levelling and bunding of the fields. The soils were analysed by courtesy of the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi. An area of 120 acres was completely uncultivable having ditches and ravines and a very high content of salinity. At the end of two years, it was brought under the plough and today practically all the land is cropped.

With floods becoming almost a regular feature in rural Delhi, an elaborate system of drainage was laid out incurring heavy expenditure which facilitated the flow of water from the fields after the floods.

Kanwar Mahinderpal Singh in his wheat field

MECHANISATION

The farm has taken to almost complete mechanisation by eliminating the bullock power. The machinery comprising 3 tractors and 24 different implements was installed from the very inception of the Cooperative Society.

When he began the use of chemical fertilizers, the neighbouring cultivators were of the opinion that in due course, the soils of this farm would become unproductive and extremely saline.

Nitrogen, phosphorus and potash were incorporated in the fertilizer schedule for all the crops grown, *viz.*, wheat, berseem, green peas, gram, oats, moong, sugarcane and tobacco.

The farm continued to progress steadily in raising the yields of crops each year. The neighbouring cultivators frequently visited the farm but they were extremely critical in the first year. Finally this criticism wore out when they observed for full three years,

that not only the yields of crops had been increasing but a great portion of the alkaline area had been reclaimed. These very cultivators finally approached Kanwar Mahinderpal Singh to supply them fertilizers. And today the Society is the stockist of the Delhi State Cooperative Federation for all types of fertilizers which are being sold to the neighbouring cultivators.

SOURCE OF IRRIGATION

Water is obtained from the Western Jamuna Canal, but this being inadequate it is supplemented by tubewells. Kanwar Mahinderpal Singh is the pioneer in the boring of shallow cavity tubewells in this area. After many experiments, he has installed 8 tubewells which utilise the sub-soil water for irrigation and in turn help to lower the rising water table. The neighbouring cultivators have also now taken up to the installation of these shallow tubewells, which are comparatively inexpensive.

Kanwar Mahinderpal Singh utilises the tractors to the maximum. After cultivation and sowing operations, the tractors are used for pumping out the water from the wells. Of course, this method is very expensive, but there is no alternative as electricity has not yet come into this village.

INCREASE IN YIELDS

The yield of wheat grown at the Farm was originally 12 maunds per acre. By the introduction of improved farming practices such as use of fertilizers, pesticides, quality seeds, and adequate water and drainage, the average yield has been raised to 31 maunds per acre.

The yields of other crops have also been more than doubled.

At the very inception of the Cooperative Society, wheat seed has been supplied to the Governments of Uttar Pradesh and Delhi Administration. The Society is also a Registered Seed Grower with the Block Development Officer and the National Seeds Corporation of India.

As the farm is situated on the suburb of Delhi, the production of vegetables and fodder seems to be more remunerative than cereals. Now 75 per cent of the area is under vegetables and fodder.

MARKETING

Kanwar Mahinderpal Singh says that marketing of vegetables and fodder is perhaps the most difficult task that has to be tackled at the Farm. The present marketing is monopolised by traders. The difference in price the cultivator receives and the consumer pays for vegetables is perhaps over 300 per cent.

There was a severe frost in the winter of 1963 which destroyed quite a few of the standing crops. The summer of 1964 brought with it unprecedented floods in the history of this decade which completely destroyed the standing crops. The determined Kanwar Mahinderpal Singh is confident that he will not only wipe out previous losses but make good profit.

He is of the definite opinion that production can be increased in this country by well over 50 per cent in a short while provided there are timely supply of fertilizers and pesticides, small projects for irrigation, credit facilities for the farmers are simplified, and, last but not the least, that farming is put on business lines, and industrial units being allowed to take to farming in a big way, without of course infringing on the tenancy laws. "In fact", he remarks, "fifty per cent is rather a modest figure, for if we have boosted the yields by over 150 per cent there is no reason why others cannot do this."

(Courtesy : Fertiliser News)

For irrigating the field, Mahinderpal Singh uses his tractor.

SCHOOLS THROUGH SELF-HELP

Achampet Samiti Sets Example

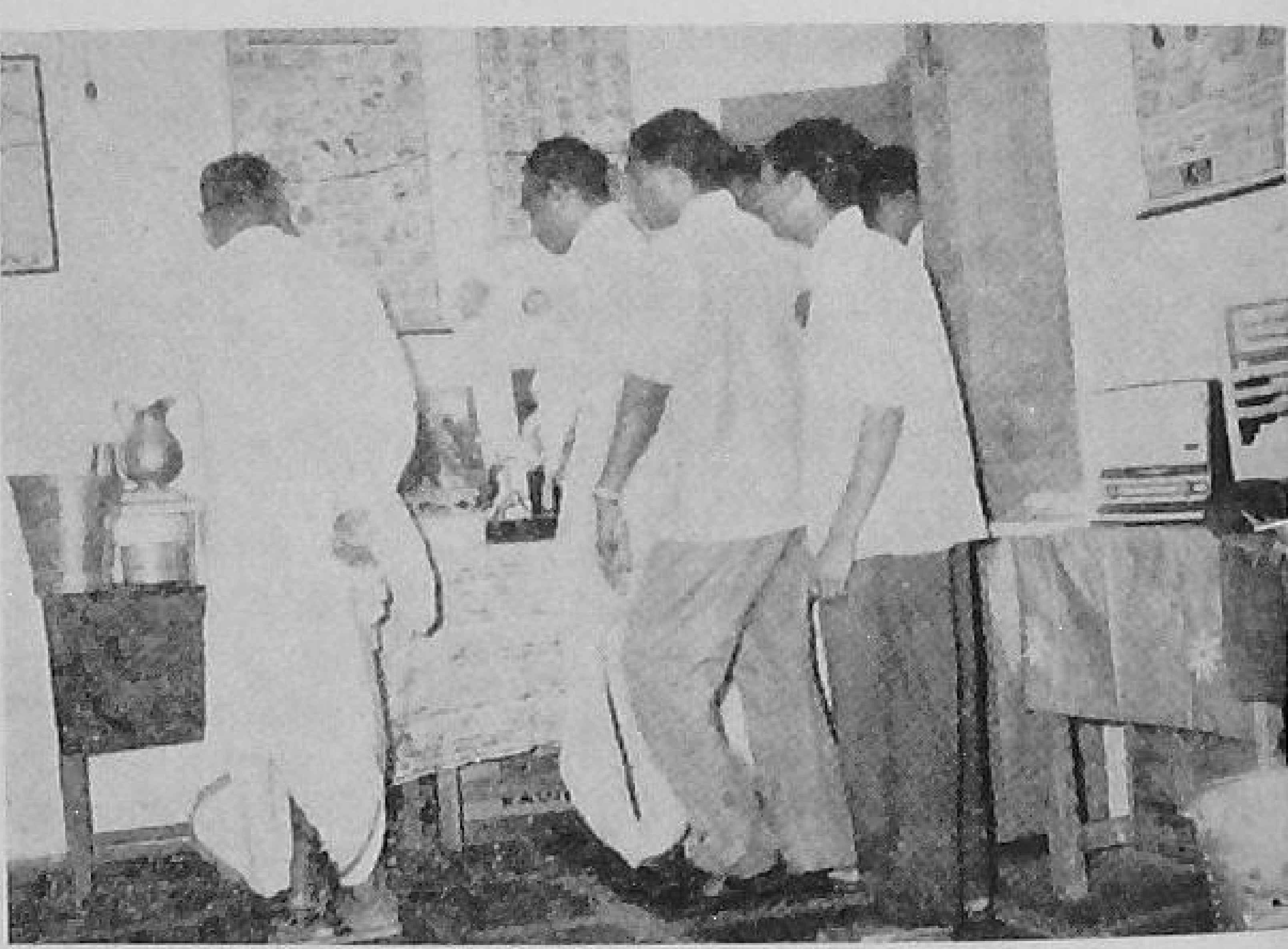
M. GOPAL REDDY

PRIMARY EDUCATION, no doubt, is a vital necessity for the children of our country. Without a literate mass no country can hope to move forward. After Independence the necessity of spreading education at a faster pace has been urgently felt. Achampet Samiti in Mahboobnagar district of Andhra Pradesh has perhaps set a unique record in this respect. The Samiti has launched a programme of school improvement through self-help.

Progress is bound to be speedier in any field when it is attained without dependence on others. This has been rightly realised by Achampet Samiti which has enthused the people under its jurisdiction to contribute liberally in cash or kind to meet the necessities of primary schools. It is remarkable that 74 villages have equipped their 92 schools all through their own resources without banking on aid from the Government. Now, the remotest village under Achampet Samiti has a well-equipped school.

At first a survey was made to find out the requirements of each school. Then door to door collection of donations—cash, grains, furniture etc.—was made. Where there were no school buildings the construction was started through voluntary labour. The schools were provided with alphabetical charts, globes, teaching aids, furniture, time pieces, bells, radios, science apparatus etc. Even mid-day meals were served to the students. Poor children were given clothes, slates and books out of the donations collected.

During 1963-64 over Rs. 28,000 were collected and an impressive exhibition was held where all the collected materials were displayed. There were also lists of donors. This exhibition inspired villagers to contribute more for the schools. The villagers realised that they were contributing to usher in a better future for their children. The teachers did not lag behind. They volunteered to take free classes for illiterate adults. They began to evince keen eagerness to work for the community.



Visitors admiring materials collected by Achampet Samiti for schools

The Samiti no doubt will continue this beneficial scheme till primary education is spread to every nook and corner of the area covered by it. The Samiti is determined to see that not a single child goes without the primary education.

BIRTH OF A YOUTH CLUB

S. SETHURAMAN

BETTATHAPURAM IS a hamlet of Bilichi Panchayat in Coimbatore district of Madras. Six miles away from it is situated our Social Education Officers' Training Centre. This village is one of the project villages for the S.E.O. trainees for field work.

As one enters the village, he can see a common platform constructed under a tree, which is used for relaxation and gossiping by young and old. During the first few visits, I used to sit on the platform and initiate a discussion. At first the villagers felt shy to speak but gradually they came out with their problems and experiences. But the youngmen of the village took an indifferent attitude. They hardly participated in our discussions.

I found out that there were nearly forty youngmen in that village and half of them were working in a factory nearby. Others were agriculturists who had small plots of land to cultivate. For recreation all of them went to pictures.

As days went by, about ten youngmen became friendly with me. We used to discuss many things. One day, casually I suggested that they could have some games in the evening. Even though they agreed to it, it appeared that they were not very much interested in that idea.

One day, four S.E.O. trainees and myself managed to hold a discussion with the youngmen of the village on various topics. During the course of discussion, I told them that in some villages, the youth clubs were functioning well and the members derived a lot of benefits out of these youth clubs.

One of them said, "Why don't we start a youth club here ?" "What do you propose to do through that ?" I asked him. He did not know. But he suggested, "First of all let us meet and discuss. Then we will have some ideas."

It was decided that all the youngmen of the village should meet next Sunday. On the appointed day when I reached the place with some S.E.Os, I found only eight youngmen sitting there. They had suggestions for the constitution of a youth club. Next Sunday, they elected the office-bearers. They were very particular not to have many members in the club, because they feared that the presence of too many members might adversely affect the functioning of the club.

At the next meeting, it was proposed that the village should have a radio and the common building electrified. These suggestions were put up to the Panchayat president, but he said it would take some time. The president of the youth club wanted to have S.E. Centre there for which the Panchayat president readily agreed. But nothing happened even after some months. One day when I was talking with the youth club president, I saw a daily newspaper in his hand. When I enquired about it I came to know that the youth club had decided to contribute to the daily since nothing had been done by the Panchayat president.

Now one year is over. One may admit that the achievements so far have not been spectacular. But one can, no doubt, derive a sense of satisfaction. The members of the youth club participated in various activities like youth rally, public health seminar and school and community meets, organised by the Training Centre. They evinced keen interest and organised a cultural programme for the Community Development Officers from Tanganyika. They prepared a Tennikoit court which is used by the school boys. They undertook some small shramdan projects. Recently they conducted a competition for the kitchen garden and prize was given for the best.

The youth club plans to open a night school for the illiterate boys. Each member has decided to dig a compost pit in his field. Thus the youngmen of Bettathapuram have come forward to share the burden of nation building. They have taken the right path and they are determined to set a noble example before other youngmen of the country who are yet to realise their responsibility to the country and the nation.

SAWALI—A MODEL VILLAGE

AN OBSCURE village, Sawali, recently gained prominence when it was adjudged as the best Panchayat in Mudhole block in Andhra Pradesh. The village, which is tucked away in a fairly interior part of Adilabad district, has a number of spectacular achievements to its credit.

Sawali, with a population of 1,162, saw the birth of the Panchayat some five years ago. The Sarpanch despite his old age (sixty years) takes active interest in the betterment of the people and is a source of inspiration to others.

The Gram Panchayat has been collecting the entire demand under taxes and non-taxes year after year. It has constructed an imposing office building at one of the main entrances to the village at a cost of Rs. 8,400. The villagers contributed shramdan and cash to the tune of Rs. 2,630 for the building.

Another achievement of the Panchayat is the provision of protected water supply to the village at a cost of Rs. 40,000. The villagers have so far contributed Rs. 6,600 in cash and labour for this scheme. The construction of well and engine room has been completed. The work of construction of reservoir is in progress. A remarkable aspect of this scheme is that the work is being executed by the Panchayat members themselves with the technical aid of the Block engineering staff. The villagers are very enthusiastic in pushing through this work, as this will save the village womenfolk from the present hardship in securing drinking water for the household.

The roads in the village are kept clean. There is a pucca side drain of a length of 100 yards. The Panchayat has proposed to construct pucca drains to cover the entire village.

The Panchayat has been able to urge the farmers to adapt improved methods of cultivation. The main crops in the village are jowar, cotton and chillies. There are fifty-four progressive ryots in the village. There are fifty-nine compost pits prepared on scientific lines. One of the progressive cultivators (also a Panchayat Member) was declared as the best cultivator in the Taluk during 1963-64. Pesticides are regularly used to save crops from damage. There is a farmers' association in the village also, which meets often and discusses problems in agricultural operations and suggests ways and means to get over them.

The Panchayat has also established a primary school. The two-room school building with plenty of space all around presents a lovely sight to any visitor. The children have taken up enthusiastically to the midday meal scheme (CARE Programme). There are sixty beneficiaries under this scheme for the implementation of which the villagers promptly pay their contribution. There is a Mahila Mandal in this village. The women are trained in tape weaving in this centre under cottage industries scheme. The youth of the village exuberantly run a youth club with twenty-nine members. The club has provision for out-door and in-door games. There is also a Bhajan Mandal with thirty-two members. The Sarpanch himself takes keen interest in cultural activities.

A Multipurpose Cooperative Society in the village looks after the needs of the villagers. Eighty-five persons have been enrolled so far as members of the society. A sum of Rs. 24,699 was advanced as a loan last year. There is not a single defaulter among the members which shows their sincerity and zeal to improve their lot.

Sawali is proud of its hard working, sincere, and enthusiastic inhabitants. These people are silently giving shape to a revolution which aims at changing the face of rural India. The villagers of Sawali like so many villagers all over the country are determined to usher in a better living standard for their future generations. Through self-help and the community development programme they are not only improving their own lot but also setting a noble example before them who are yet to realise their responsibility to the nation. Sawali has rightly earned the distinction of being the best Panchayat in a Block and it bids fair to be a real model in an even wider sphere in this new and resurgent India.

(Contributed)

A view of the pumpset room at Sawali

FROM HERE AND THERE

RURAL MANPOWER PROGRAMME

A PROVISION of Rs. 100 crores has been sought to cover the first phase of the Rural Manpower Programme during the Fourth Plan. The Ministry of Community Development and Cooperation, which is now in charge of the programme, has suggested that this amount would be the minimum required to achieve the target of providing 2.5 million persons with 100 days a year employment by the third year of the Fourth Plan. To achieve the objective of 5 million jobs in the Fourth Plan, it is estimated that Rs. 250 crores would be required.

The schemes to be given high priority under the programme should be minor irrigation works, drainage and anti-water logging measures, soil conservation, afforestation, land reclamation, construction of market roads, village orchards, village pisciculture, etc.

Panchayati Raj institutions should be associated fully with the planning and implementation of the programme. The desirability of utilising labour co-operatives and voluntary organisations like Bharat Sevak Samaj has also been stressed. For the programme to yield better results, it is felt that the existing Block set-up should be strengthened; a suitable organisation should also be set up at the district level.

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APPLIED NUTRITION PROGRAMME

THE APPLIED Nutrition Programme, which is now being implemented in the country with the assistance of UNICEF, FAO and WHO, will be considerably stepped up during the Fourth Plan. Priority will be given to Tribal C.D. Blocks and other markedly backward blocks.

The main emphasis will be on placing the programme on a self-generating basis and on intensifying the programme in the blocks selected. It is also proposed to give some Central assistance during the Fourth Plan to certain production components of the scheme like school gardening, establishment of poultry units in schools and assistance to associate organisations which normally do not form part of regular plan schemes.

The Applied Nutrition Programme, which aims at increased production at the village level of various protective foods and training of villagers in their production and consumption, is now in operation in 183 C.D. Blocks in Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, Madras, Mysore, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, West Bengal, Punjab and Himachal Pradesh. Thirty four more blocks are to be taken up shortly in Bihar, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Delhi.

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RAJASTHAN PANCHAYAT ELECTION STUDY

A STUDY of recent Panchayat General Elections has revealed that more educated and comparatively elder people have been elected as Sarpanchas in Rajasthan. Majority of the elected representatives belong to agriculturists class.

About 64 per cent of the elected Sarpanchas have studied up to the middle standard, 24.8 per cent above the middle standard and 9.2 per cent are just literate people. The percentage of elected Sarpanchas educated above the middle standard has gone up by 5.7 per cent while the percentage of representatives educated below the middle standard has gone up by 13.6 per cent as compared to the previous elections.

Out of the total elected Sarpanchas 81.6 per cent are agriculturists, 12.4 per cent are from business community and the rest belong to other professions.

Among the elected representatives 40.7 per cent are in the age group, 30-39 and 29.4 per cent in the age group, 40-49. Only 11.9 per cent of the elected people are below 30 years.

Another notable feature of these elections is that more people with experience of Panchayati Raj institutions have been reelected.

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AID TO TEACHER'S WIDOW

SHRI MOHANLAL Sukhadia, Chief Minister of Rajasthan, has sanctioned a financial aid of Rs. 500 to the widow of late Shri Manohar Lal, a senior teacher in the Higher Secondary School at Chauhatan in Barmer district.

Shri Manohar Lal succumbed to death following a snake bite while he was on duty during the last Panchayat elections.

BID TO RAISE WHEAT PRODUCTION

AN INTENSIVE agricultural programme will be launched in nine-Panchayat Samiti areas of Jaipur district of Rajasthan during the next *Rabi* crop to raise wheat production. The programme has already been launched in Bessi and Dausa Panchayat Samitis.

Lalsot, Jamwa Ramgarh, Amber, Jhotwada, Sanganer, Sikkai, Bandikui, Bairath and Shahpura are the Panchayat Samitis which have been selected for the intensive agricultural programme.

Training of agricultural workers has been started. Recently a training camp was organised at Jamwa Ramgarh to train Gram Sevaks and other workers of the Agriculture Department.

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CHANGED OUTLOOK

IMPROVED agricultural implements and chemical fertilizers are becoming popular among the cultivators of Kota district which comes under the Chambal irrigation project. Thirteen farmers have purchased tractors and 49 modern ploughs have been distributed. Scientific methods for the construction of drains etc. are also being adapted.

Arrangements have been made for free soil analysis. This year 2,928 tons of fertilizers and 1,274 tons of manure were distributed.

FOOD PRODUCTION RAISED

FOOD OUTPUT in Moondwa Panchayat in Nagaur district of Rajasthan has increased by 25 per cent following the intensification of agricultural operations. More than 5,300 mds. of improved seed were distributed to farmers during this year.

Though Nagaur district is a single crop area, efforts are made to grow wheat etc. in Rabi season. About 100 acres of land have so far been brought under wheat cultivation.

A sum of Rs. 81,000 has been distributed as loan under minor irrigation schemes.

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MORE LAND UNDER SUGARCANE

KESHORAIPATAN Panchayat Samiti in Bundi district of Rajasthan is increasing use of canal irrigation facilities to raise food out-put. Efforts are also being made to increase sugarcane and rice acreage. Land under sugarcane cultivation has gone up by 12 times and that under rice has increased by 10 times.

Farmers have started using improved seeds and have adapted improved methods of cultivation. The per acre yield of sugarcane is now 1,300 to 1,600 mds. and that of rice is 30 to 35 mds.

HYBRID MAIZE PRODUCTION RECORD

A SUCCESSFUL demonstration was laid out by a cultivator, Shri Arjun Singh of village Sirol in Morar Block of Gwalior district in Madhya Pradesh, who encouraged by Extension students of Agriculture College, Gwalior, produced 60 maunds of hybrid maize in one acre of land.

The demonstration was confined to one-tenth of an acre of land. The land was ploughed four times with *desi* plough and 6.6 maunds of superphosphate was applied to it. There was one foot of distance between row to row and one plant to another. Thirteen seers of urea were applied after the twelfth day of sowing. Another dose of 13 seers of urea was applied on the fortieth day of sowing. One spray with 0.04% Edrin was done on the seventeenth day of sowing so as to save the crop from insect pests. The cob formation was observed from the fiftieth day of sowing.

Harvesting of 1/10th acre of plot yielded 6 maunds of maize, *i.e.*, 60 maunds per acre which is a record yield of maize in this area.

The progressive cultivators of the area have decided to adapt this method and to take to hybrid maize sowing during kharif season.

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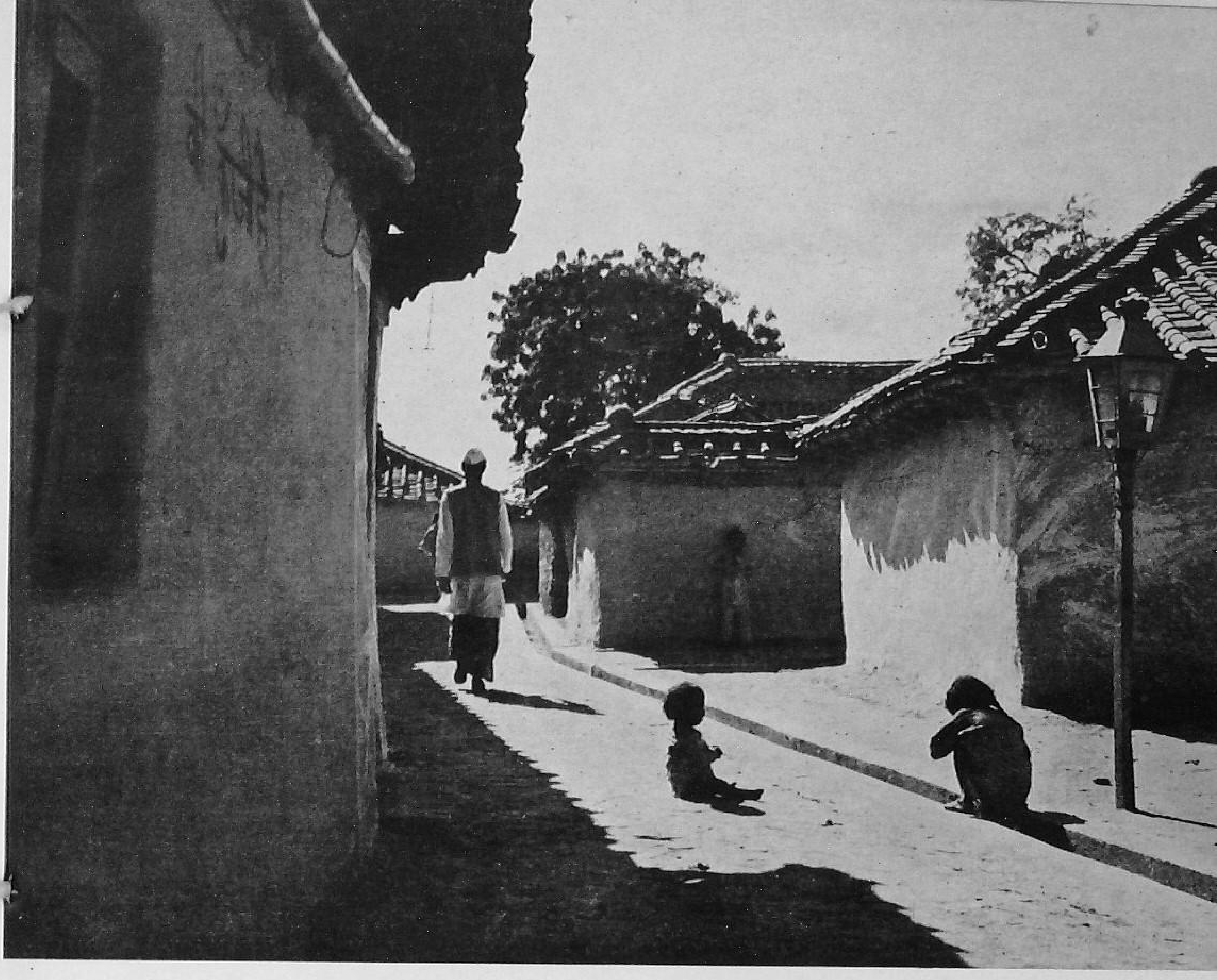
FILLIP TO AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

VAST AND varied steps were taken to promote agricultural production in Gwalior district of Madhya Pradesh during the year ending December 31, 1964, says a progress report.

During the period, 74 irrigation wells were constructed and 32 old wells were repaired in Dabra and Morar Blocks. Three oil-engine pumps and 3 electrically-operated irrigation pumps were installed at a cost of Rs. 20,000 and 38 Persian pumps installed at a cost of Rs. 30,000. Soil conservation work was completed on 4,741 acres.

Dry farming practices were adapted on 25,767 acres while an area of 475 acres was converted into a double-cropped area. Cultivators prepared 4,569 tons of rural and town compost. Agriculturists were convinced of the advantages of green manuring. As a result, they used green manures on 16,922 acres of land. Chemical fertilizers were also used. Plant protection measures were taken and pesticides were sprayed over 12,093 acres of standing crop. Japanese method of paddy cultivation was introduced on 9,029 acres of land. With a view to popularising improved technique of agriculture, 157 demonstration plots were laid in important village centres of the district.



TOWARDS A BETTER TOMORROW

A growing tendency is noticed today in villages to keep the house and its surroundings clean. Dark, dingy, thatched huts have become things of the past in many villages. The government through its various programmes, particularly the Community Development Programme, is trying to convert the villages into "tiny Edens" as dreamt of by the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi.

This photograph showing well kept houses, a paved street, cemented drain and a street light in village Astana Bhira of Mohammed Gohna Block in Azamgarh district of Uttar Pradesh tells of the drive and initiative of the people of this village. Astana Bhira and its innumerable counterparts are engaged in building a better and prosperous India.

Planting of paddy seedlings in progress

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